



Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish,  
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## ***CRYPTANTHA SCOPARIA*** **MINER'S CANDLE**

Miner's Candle is a slender annual with simple or branched stems that are 5-15 cm tall. The alternate, narrow, strap shaped leaves are 2-4 cm long; those at the base are usually brown by the time the plant is fruiting. Stems are sparsely covered with straight hairs appressed to the surface, while the leaves have some spreading hairs. Tiny, white flowers are borne on coiled stalks that unwind and elongate as flowering progresses from the base upward. The corolla is ca. 1 mm high and has a small united portion below and 5 spreading petals above. The narrow calyx is covered with bristly hairs and becomes 4-6 mm long in fruit. The 4 lance-shaped nutlets are ca. 2 mm long, ca 0.5 mm wide, and are finely bumpy. Flowering in June.

Annual species of *CRYPTANTHA* are distinguished by characters of the seeds. *C. SCOPARIA* is distinguished by having 4 similar nutlets that are covered with fine bumps and that are ca. 4 times as long as they are wide. A hand lens or microscope are needed for positive identification.